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ORATION

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

City Council and Citizens of Boston.

JULY 4, 1882,

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY

JOHN DAVIS LONG.



Boston:

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE CITY COUNCIL.

M D C C C L X X X I I.



Class E. 5

Book E. 21



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Enchanted

JUL 12 1909

CITY OF BOSTON.

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, July 17, 1882.

Resolved, That the thanks of the City Council are due, and they are hereby tendered, to His Excellency JOHN D. LONG, for the patriotic and instructive Oration delivered by him, before the Municipal Government and the citizens of Boston, on the Fourth of July instant; and that he be requested to furnish a copy thereof for publication.

Passed in Common Council. Came up for concurrence. Read and concurred. Approved by the Mayor July 18, 1882.

A true copy.

Attest:

JOHN T. PRIEST,

Asst. City Clerk.

O R A T I O N .

IT has seemed to you and your associates, Mr. Mayor, not unfitting, that, once in a century, a representative of the whole Commonwealth of Massachusetts should speak for this, her capital city, on Independence day. A hundred years ago, as now, their interests, their hopes, their patriotism, were one. If Boston seemed then to stand out as the proscenium from which the curtain of the drama rose, the scene was a rapidly shifting one, and the actors came not alone, like Sam Adams and Warren and Hancock and Knox, from Boston. Like Lincoln from Hingham, Hawley from Northampton, Prescott from Pepperell, Heath from Roxbury, Gridley from Canton, John Adams from Quincy, Cobb from Taunton, Thomas from Kingston, Ward from Shrewsbury, and many others, they came from Massachusetts at large, and so identified the whole province and this its chiefest town, as they have been identified from that day to this, in the cause of liberty and progress.

Mindful, therefore, of the close relations which have thus, at all times, bound Massachusetts and Boston together, I thank you for your courtesy in inviting me to speak for you to-day, and I am here in obedience to your call. I have, as needs must be with a date celebrated now for more than a hundred anniversaries, and with its topics rehearsed till every possible variation has been exhausted, no new word to utter, no illumination to throw upon the picture. But the day is our national birthday, and even its familiar story cannot be told too often, if it shall wake each year the patriotic pulse of a people so free that they are almost unconscious of the value of their birth-right of freedom, or shall educate their children to admire and emulate the high spirit, the devotion to liberty, and the love of country, which inspired the fathers and founders of the republic.

Let us, then, go back to 1776, and recall the scene and event which we now commemorate, never forgetting that they were only links in the chain which, under Providence, had been forming for centuries, and forming, let us also, in justice, remember, under English law, and under the inspiration of English hearts. The separation of the colonies from Great Britain was the result of no single cause; nor was it occasioned solely by reason of a chivalrous devotion

to great principles of constitutional right or resistance to oppression. The vast territory of India, stretching over half a continent and sunk in the effeminacy and ignorance of centuries of stagnation, might for years, and may to-day, submit to the rapacious sway of the British isles,—to the terror of a superior race enriching themselves at its expense. But it was not written in the book of human destiny that the Christian civilization of the New World, the intellectual culture of New England, the growing material importance of New York and Pennsylvania, the high spirit of Virginia and the Carolinas,—nay, that any of our colonies, proud of their lineage, devoted to an independent faith, founding among themselves institutions of learning, expanding apace with the very grandeur and extent of the new continent, and year by year conscious more and more of their rapid growth and coming domain and achievement,—should hang as a dependence on an island in the Atlantic, more than that the apple, ripe and round, should cling to the stem and shrivel there in premature decay. In such a condition were the very essentials to cultivate the spirit of progress, of independent citizenship, and of the right of intelligent men, chafing under the stupid narrowness of the dolt who happened at that time to encumber the British throne, to frame their own laws and govern themselves.

The divine right of kings was not a doctrine that could thrive in such soil; and no sooner did the colonies begin, as a result of simple growth, to feel their power and to touch shoulder with one another in the sympathy of their geographical and political affinities, than independence became inevitable, and only sought occasion and apology for its own assertion.

To this end had the instruction of the mother country herself led. From her own pulpits, in the songs of her own poets, in the words of her own orators, in the progress of her own statesmanship, had for centuries been flowing influences that were lifting the individual man, levelling the accidental potentate, and proclaiming the unimportance of those who govern, and the overwhelming consequence and needs of the governed, even to the humblest citizen. It was a matter of indifference whether Burke and Chatham in England, and Adams and Otis and the town-meetings of Massachusetts Bay in America, lifted their voices in a British parliament or in Faneuil Hall or Pembroke town-house. The words they spoke, the sentiments they uttered, were eternal truth, and had no local habitation or name. Under these circumstances, allegiance to Great Britain was nothing but a habit and a sentiment. The moment it came face to face

in conflict with a right, it went to pieces like a bubble; the moment it involved the sacrifice of a principle, the cost of injustice to the smallest penny, it was gone forever. I take it, there was nothing in British oppression that bore with special hardship on America. It is not likely that any malicious intent existed on the part of king or ministry to wrong and tyrannize over us; and both were no doubt honest in their conviction that we were a stiff-necked generation, turning in ingratitude on the parentage that had borne and nursed us. The burdens at which we actually rebelled were slight in comparison with those which we had previously borne for years, especially during the wars with France. In comparison with those which, in our recent civil war, we inflicted on ourselves, they were next to nothing. It would be hard to point to the man or community that, prior to the outbreak of bad blood, suffered greatly, in person or property, from British tyranny. Even the Declaration of Independence, which we commemorate to-day, if you carefully peruse it, lacks something of that record of specific grievances and acts of oppression, which we should expect in a statement made in justification of rebellion and treason. It would not be difficult to recite wrongs which other peoples have borne and still bear,

tenfold greater than those from which we wrested independence. We who, in recent years, to suppress rebellion, willingly endured excessive governmental interference with personal rights, and who saw multitudes of new offices created, and swarms of officials and standing armies in our midst, can hardly refrain from smiling at the complaints so grandiloquently put in 1776. Nor must it be overlooked that most of these complaints were directed against the very measures which were resorted to to overcome what Great Britain regarded as treason, and which never would have been resorted to at all had our fathers been submissive. I do not mean that there were no grievances. Grievances there were, such as taxation without representation, though the actual taxes imposed were slight, and in any accustomed form the burden of them would have raised no murmur; such also, as the general control and management of provincial affairs by an agency remote and indifferent. But these were grievances, not so much invented and asserted by the mother country as inherent in the very organization of her colonial system. It was the instinctive revulsion which an intelligent and not inferior people felt for the natural unfitness and injustice of the British colonial system as applied to a vigorous and self-conscious community, which made any

restraint intolerable, and independence a necessity. To my mind it is infinitely more creditable to our fathers that freedom was in this way the result, not of resentment, but of a high intellectual self-respect, and of the conviction that in the maturity of their growth the time had come for them to take their own destiny into their own hands.

Once inaugurated the struggle leaped forthwith to the bitterness and desperation of the death-hug. If the provocation was lacking before, it was lacking no longer. Fatally ignorant of the pride, the English thoroughness and tenacity of her own children, Great Britain adopted measures of coercion to which they could not and would not submit. And when there came the Port Bill and the Enforcing Act and the Stamp Act, which were intended to humiliate Boston and deprive the people of their familiar privileges and place them at the mercy of a ministerial board sitting around a table in London city, the fatal step was taken; the error could never be retrieved; estrangement was only widening with each forcible effort to heal it, and the birth of the new republic was assured. The rebellion of 1861 failed, not because of a lack of brave men and devoted effort, but because it was unfit and out of joint with the moral and physical order of the times. Unlike the American Revolution, it was a movement not with

but against the lead of civilization; and outside of its original limits never struck the spark of sympathy. In 1776, however, the common heart of the whole line of colonies responded to the peril of that one which was first to suffer. In the fall of 1774 met at Philadelphia the original Continental Congress, more with a view to adjustment than to independence. Its professions of loyalty were sincere, and its appeals were not to arms but to the sense of justice in the mother country. But the tide was stronger than those who rode it. The time for the friendly arbitrament of counsel and delay was gone; and when the immortal Second Congress met in Philadelphia, in May, 1775, Patrick Henry had already thundered in the Virginia Convention that there was no peace, that the war had actually begun, and as for him give him liberty or give him death. Lexington green had been crimsoned with the blood of the embattled farmers, and Concord Bridge was already the beginning of our victories, and henceforth the romance of our annals. No Congress could make history so fast as it was already making at Bunker Hill, in Gloucester Harbor, along the shores of Quincy and Marshfield, at the entrenchments around Boston, and in the spontaneous outburst of a common enthusiasm, which brought to the camp under Washington, from Carolina, from Vir-

ginia, from Pennsylvania, from Maryland, marching over the mountains, and eager for the fray, the sons of sister colonies, the riflemen of Daniel Morgan, the Puritan and cavalier, the woodsmen and farmers, the children of the Huguenots and the Presbyterians.

Carrying out the instruction of his constituents, Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia, the author of the resolution for independence, introduced it into Congress on the 7th of June, 1776. It met with the enthusiastic support of John Adams, who seconded it with a fervor and power that gained him the appellation of the Colossus. It was favored by the subtle and philosophic Franklin, who not only comprehended the grandeur of the occasion, but smarted to repay, in the achieved independence of his country, and in the loss to Great Britain of her brightest jewels, the insults rankling in his breast, which, during his attempt years before to plead the cause of America before the Privy Council in England, had been heaped upon him, amid the sneers of a British ministry, by the stinging tongue of Attorney-General Wedderburne. It was supported, too, by the inflexible will of Sam Adams, and no man had from the earliest more clearly foreseen the result. On the other side was ranged the cautious Dickinson, of Philadelphia, who, till that time the most influential member of Congress, now doubted

whether the hour for separation had come, and, doubting, was lost. New York, hesitating to risk its commercial existence, had instructed its delegates, themselves ripe enough for the work, to hold back. South Carolina voted against the resolution. Pennsylvania and Delaware were divided. But these defections were idle. The real resolution of independence had long since been uttered. It had been the staple of every town-meeting in America, the subject of every fireside conversation, the thought of every farmer and mechanic; and when the fifty men who assembled in that Congress, by more than a two-thirds vote, adopted in Committee of the Whole, on the first day of July, 1776, the resolution of independence, they but gave expression to the sentiment of America, as also John Adams expressed it in that unpremeditated burst of eloquence, of which no report exists except in the traditions of its magnificent boldness and vigor, and in the imaginary reproduction of Webster. On the second day of July even the fears of the minority were overcome, and the resolution was adopted, without a dissenting vote, that the United Colonies were, and of right ought to be, free and independent States. Two days later, on the fourth, the day we celebrate, the declaration of principles on which the resolution of independence was

founded, drawn by Thomas Jefferson, then thirty-three years of age, and revised by Franklin and Adams, was presented and adopted, and, with the broad sign manual of John Hancock at its foot, became the great charter of the war, the bulletin to England and the world of the justice and dignity of our cause.

Recall the quaint and homely city of Philadelphia; the gloom that hung over it from the terrible responsibility of the step there taken; the modest hall, still standing and baptized as the cradle of liberty. On its tower swung the bell, which yet survives, with its legend, "PROCLAIM LIBERTY THROUGHTOUT ALL THE WORLD TO ALL THE INHABITANTS THEREOF." That day it rang out a proclamation of liberty that will indeed echo round the world, and in the ears of all the inhabitants thereof, long after the bell itself shall have crumbled into dust. Hancock is in the President's chair; before him sit the half hundred delegates, who at that time represent America. Among the names it is remarkable how many there are that have since been famous in our annals,—Harrison, Lee, Adams, Clinton, Chase, Stockton, Paine, Hopkins, Wilson, Nelson, Lewis, Walcott, Thompson, Rutledge, and more. The committee appointed to draft the declaration are

Jefferson, youngest and tallest; John Adams; Sherman, shoemaker; Franklin, printer; and Robert R. Livingston. If the patriot Sam Adams, at the sunrise of Lexington, could say, "Oh! what a glorious morning for America!" how well might he have renewed, in the more brilliant noontime of July 4, 1776, the same prophetic words! There is nothing in the prophecies of old more striking and impressive than the words of John Adams, who declared the event would be celebrated by succeeding generations as a great anniversary festival and commemorated, as a day of deliverance, from one end of the continent to the other; that through all the gloom he could see the light; that the end was worth all the means; and that posterity would triumph in the transaction.

I am not of those who overrate the past. I know that the men of 1776 had the common weaknesses and shortcomings of humanity. I read the Declaration of Independence with no feeling of awe; and yet if I were called upon to select from the history of the world any crisis grander, loftier, purer, more heroic, I should know not where to turn. It seems simple enough to-day. There is no school-boy who will not tell you he knows it by heart; and so much a part of the national fibre is it, that the school-boy

cannot conceive of his or any American's not declaring and doing the same thing. But it was something else that day. The men who signed the declaration knew not but they were signing warrants for their own ignominious execution on the gibbet. It was the desperation of the punster's wit that led one of them to say that unless they hung together, they would all hang separately. The bloody victims of the Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745 were still a warning to rebels; and the gory holocaust of Culloden was fresh in the memory. But it was not only the personal risk; it was risking the homes, the commerce, the lives, the property, the honor, the future destiny of three million innocent people,— men, women, and children. It was defying, on behalf of a straggling chain of colonies clinging to the sea-board, the most imperial power of the world. It was, more than all, like Columbus sailing into awful uncertainty of untried space; casting off from an established and familiar form of government and polities; drifting away to unknown methods, and upon the dangerous and yawning chaos of democratic institutions; flying from ills they had to those they knew not of; and, perhaps, laying the way for a miserable and bloody catastrophe in anarchy and riot. There are times

when ordinary men are borne by the tide of an occasion to crests of grandeur in conduct and action. Such a time, such an occasion, was that which to-day we celebrate. While the signers of the Declaration were picked men, none the less true is it that their extraordinary fame is due not more to their merits than to the crisis at which they were at the helm, and to the great popular instinct which they obeyed and expressed.

And so we ask, why do we commemorate with such veneration and display this special epoch and event in our history; why do we repeat the words our fathers spoke or wrote; why cherish their names, when our civilization is better than theirs, and when we have reached in science, art, education, religion, in polities, in every phase of human development, even in morals, a higher level? It is because we recognize that in their beginnings the eternal elements of truth and right and justice were conspicuous, and to those eternal verities we pay our tribute, and not to their surroundings, except so far as we poetically let the form stand for the spirit, the man for the idea, the event for the purpose. And it is also because we can do no better work than to perpetuate virtue in the citizen by keeping always fresh in the popular mind, whether we do it by the art of the

painter, by oration, or by bonfire, the great heroic deeds and times of our history. In this light it is almost impossible to overrate the influence on national destiny of a legend or a name. Look back to your own childhood and tell me when you first grew mature enough to distinguish patriotism from the story of Gen. Warren and Bunker Hill. Who shall say that the tradition of Marathon and Thermopylae did not give us Concord and Yorktown, as it also gave independence to modern Greece, and glorified the career and death of Byron, and made our own Howe crusader and philanthropist? Who shall determine how far the maintenance of the integrity of our Union will depend on the memory of Webster, and find help in the picture in Faneuil Hall of his great debate with Hayne, as well as in his unanswerable logic? And who shall say to how great an extent the love of country for the next century shall rise from the fidelity with which we keep alive in the public heart the *memorabilia* of our Revolution and of our recent war? Wise, indeed, as well as loyal and beautiful, is it that to-day all America joins in this observance; that at this hour a thousand orators are speaking words of high emprise; that poets kindle the fire of patriotism, and that the heroes of 1776 stand up from the past, grander

and diviner for the illusion of distance, and point the way to the highest ideals of national attainment. The valuable thing in the past is not the man or the event, which are both always ordinary, and which, under the enchantment of distance and the pride of descent, we love to surround with exaggerated glory; it is rather in the sentiment for which the man and the event stand. The ideal is alone substantial and alone survives.

Let us avoid undue praise of the fathers, because the bare truth is tribute enough, and because it is so easy to exaggerate the past. Such undue exaltation of the good of other times has its demoralizing side. There is no service or manliness in belittling our own times and men. We can appreciate the past as well if we appreciate ourselves at our own true value. It is the fashion of the hour—and not a new fashion, especially when partisanship is bitter and searching—to scatter the poison of aspersion on all surrounding character, service, and system. And yet, to my mind, there is occasion for thorough satisfaction with the result of the first century of the republic. It began as an experiment, doubtful and uncertain; it began with nothing more than a feeble union of sentiment, engendered by the enthusiasm of common military service and a common

exposure; it began amid a diversity of interests and of races, of religious and ethnic characteristics; it began not only without money, but with a crushing burden of debt, which it seemed to have no resources or means of paying; it began with no hold on the coöperation of foreign powers, except the chivalrous sympathy that ended almost with the stirring events of the war that aroused it; it began in a state of public demoralization, caused by seven years of campaigning, and with a currency debased and worthless, and furnishing still a terrible warning against the rot which such inflation and depreciation cause in the character, tone, and truth of a people; it began with a discontented and disturbed soldiery, unpaid, destitute, and neglected, and smarting under the ingratitude of their country. Its early years were marked by riots and rebellions. It is claimed that nothing but the firm and enduring weight of the character of Washington held it together. Its constitution was framed and adopted only with reluctance and doubt. The morals of the people were not of a high order. The morals of public men were low. Aaron Burr was of a character so notoriously infamous, that to-day it is incredible how he could have been chosen Vice-President, and brought within two or three votes of the Presidency itself.

Hamilton was not free from reproach. Religion, when not asleep, was coarse and illiterate. Congress was the scene of debates bitter and personal to a shameful degree. The Cabinet was divided against itself. The mutual hate of Jefferson and Hamilton it would be hard to parallel. Vituperation, abuse, and slander poisoned many an honest name; and though now, the mist of prejudice having lifted, we look back and see only what was solid and valuable growth, yet in that day it was said, as we hear it said nowadays, that corruption was undermining the foundations, and that democracy was a demonstrated failure.

Read the journal of John Quincy Adams, and note what half a century ago was his estimate of the selfishness, meanness, vulgarity, and hopelessness of the public service; how speedily he looked for the disruption of a brittle republic, and with what contempt he refers to Webster and Clay, and the names we have been taught to reverence. We must not be blinded by the miasma of present abuse, that is always afloat. We must take deeper views and a wider range. Look not at any year, but on the whole century, and see what has been the advance, what the progress in arts, in science, in human life and culture, in

all that broadens the intellect and enlarges the soul, in all that humanizes and educates a people! The feeble colonies are an empire so magnificent in territory and population that the imagination cannot take it in. The imperfect league of 1776 is the majestic consolidated nation of thirty-eight States, each one an empire, and the whole the most magnificent and forward cluster of civil polity the world ever saw,—a very well-spring of human enlightenment and outgrowth in every upward direction. The national government, which was almost overthrown, even under the guard of Washington, by a whiskey riot in a ravine of the Alleghanies, has withstood the shock of a civil war, that rocked a continent to its foundations, triumphing not so much by force of arms as by the popular sense of right, and rising from the convulsion stronger than ever by reason of the eradication of the one false and diseased element which impaired it, and which was, from the first, an element of weakness as it was of wrong. Think of what has been done in the matter of education, of public schools, of universities of learning for both sexes and all races. In science we have unlocked the secrets of the earth and the air and the sea, and made them not merely

matters of wonder, but hand-maidens of homely use. Religion has been refined and elevated, and the human mind, searching for divine truth, has risen above superstition and cant, and, with knowledge for its guide, has reconciled faith with an enlightened reason. In all matters of comfort, of use, of elegance, of convenient living, of house, and table, and furniture, and light, and warmth, and health, and travel, what thorough and beneficent advance equally for all, shaming the petty meanness with which, unjust alike to the old times and the new, we inveigh against the new times and overrate the old! At home it is with a feeling of satisfaction and pride that we turn to our own Commonwealth in every department of her public life; in her spotless judiciary, which has never fallen below its best standard, and whose ermine bears no stain; or her legislature, which has always expressed the popular will, and embodied in its enactments the reach of the popular sentiment. Shall I prefer the old times, when I see government made to-day the use, the culture, the salvation of the people; saving those who are in peril from want and fire and famine; looking after the little children; caring for the insane, the idiotic, the criminal, the drunkard, the unfortunate, the orphans, and the aged; guarding the interests of the

laborer; bringing to the help of the agriculturist the best results of science, and building colleges for the promotion of the noble calling of the culture of the soil; guarding the savings of the small earners; investigating the causes of disease, and securing its prevention; giving to all the people comforts that were once not even the luxurious dreams of princes; pouring out education like streams of living water; maintaining great and generous charities, and extending the shield of its foresight and encouragement over all alike? Grant that since the rebellion of 1861, as years ago after the revolution of 1776, a period of war was followed by an extraordinary period of demoralization, resulting from the excessive and abnormal disturbance of the ordinary channels of labor and industry, and especially from that inflation of our currency which gave rise to incredible increase of expenditure and debt, and from which recovery came only with a shock. Grant that corruption sometimes exists in high places and in low; grant that polities are too often turned into barter. Whatever the evil, it cannot stand against the discernment which is so swift to uncover and shame it, and which will permit it no concealment. And there is good token in the very sensitiveness of the public mind, which

was never keener or quicker to discover and punish fraud and faithlessness than now. It must not be forgotten that the republic not only was an experiment in its inception, but is so still. We are apt to judge by the severe rules of criticism which we apply to completed work. We forget that only a few short years ago it was said that a popular government cannot succeed; that the popular mind is not sufficiently educated to be relied on; that a pure democracy has in it no stability or permanence, but must go down with the first tumult of popular frenzy; that patriotism will decay without the veneration that attaches to monarchy; and that in a government of the people, ignorance, fraud, brutality, and crime will rise by might of fist and lung to the supremacy. The wonder is, not that the republic is not perfect to-day in its machinery, its character, its results, but that, with its monstrous expansion from within and immigration from abroad, it has fared so well, and that its achievements are better than its founders dared predict or hope. Tell me what government, ancient or modern, has been more stable, or freer from convulsion. Who are our politicians, if not our presidents of colleges, our brightest poets, our most vigorous divines, our conspicuous merchants, our

foremost lawyers, our leading men everywhere? Our politics, at which we rail so much, are what we are. Do you say that there are peculiar evidences of neglect when no pulpit is without its fervid appeal for loftier patriotism; when no class graduates from college that half its orations are not on the duty of the citizen to the state; when our centennials fairly weary us with the demand, made by all who speak by voice or pen, for national purity and virtue; and when no political party dares the popular verdict that does not proclaim and exhibit its purpose of reform in every branch of the public service? Let the test of our hope or despair be not so much the severe standard of the very highest reach of the demands of to-day, but rather the modest trust with which a hundred years ago our fathers risked a democracy. Is it nothing that their perilous confidence in human nature, and in the ability and inclination of the masses to govern themselves aright, has been justified and not abused? Is it nothing that, ruled by a mob, our leaders selected from and by a mob, our laws the popular sentiment of a mob, yet such is the preponderance of the good elements over the bad, of the upward tendency over the downward, of order over disorder, of progress over stagnation, that the experiment has resulted in a century of

success; that, however imperfect the scheme in some of its outward manifestations, it is correct in principle; and that it has demonstrated the practicability and wisdom of a government of the people, by the people, for the people? If there were none in the ranks except the men who have proved unworthy, we might despair; but not when we remember that in every section of the country we still number great hosts of honest and able men fit for every political need or duty. If a period of national demoralization were followed by continued indifference and acquiescence, we might despair, but not when we see it followed by the indignant uprising of the better elements, the wholesome criticism of the press, the outcry of the poet and the philosopher, the sturdy and resolute reaction of that fundamental intelligence and honesty of the people, which are the fruit of our system of free education, and which can always be relied on in the last resort to do the work of reform when the crisis comes. For one I feel no anxiety. I regard it as a sign of the permanence of our institutions, that to-day when so many mourn over the sadder revelations of the time, a wiser philosophy looks through the ferment that is sloughing the scum from the surface and purifying the body politic from top to

bottom. To be conscious of the malady, in a republic of free schools and a free press, is to cure it.

It is easy to raise spectres of danger, and forecast perils that threaten to destroy the republic. But it will meet and beat them. It is flying in the face of nature and of experience to fear that man, with increasing expansion of his opportunities and powers, has, like a child, no horizon of promise beyond his present vision. Why should we at the approach of the next century, with its magnificent impulse onward, shudder with the same ignorant and ungodly distrust with which the old time trembled at the coming of our own? We have brought no dangers that we have not averted, no perils that have overwhelmed us. Why whisper under the breath that in the near years to come men are to withdraw more and more from the grinding of unremitting and unlightened physical toil? Do not you and I enjoy whatever exemption from it there comes to us; and shall not the humblest enjoy as much? Will it be an evil when science, with its inventions and its use of the illimitable agencies of nature, the development of which is now but in its infancy, performs still more the drudgery of toil and lets the souls of all go freer? Labor and industry, in the nature of things, will never cease; but the progress of

the ages will direct them to higher levels of employment, never dispensing with their need, but rather adding to their dignity and to the happiness they return. Why, too, this terror lest those, who have not had the sweetness and refinements and elevation of leisure, shall have them more and more as well as those to whom it certainly has brought, not harm, but culture? Has the result hitherto been so disastrous as to make us fear either the bettered conditions of the masses, or their ambition for better conditions still? Faith in the common people is not a fine phrase or a dream; it is the teaching of experience and test. They, too, may be confided in to measure and accept the necessities and inequalities that attach to human living, and they are not going to destroy any social economy which blesses them all, because it does not bless them all alike. Are not fidelity, patience, loyal service, and good citizenship, true of the kitchen, the loom, and the bench? Is there no professor's chair, no clergyman's desk, no merchant prince's counting-room, dishonored? Does, indeed, the line of simple worth or social or political stability run on the border of any class or station? The people may be trusted with their own interests. If it shall appear that any one form of govern-

ment or society fails, there will always be intelligence and wit enough to fashion a better. Forces will come at command. The instinct of self-preservation counts for something, as well as the elements of goodness and progress which are inherent in human nature. And when all these unite, while there will indeed be change and revolution, there will never be wreck and chaos. There will be fools, and fanatics, and assassins, and demagogues, and nihilists, and all sorts of insane or vicious dissolvers of security; there will be convulsions and horrors: every fair summer the lightning flashes and strikes. But all these are the tempests of the year against the unfailing sunshine and rain which make the blooming and fragrant garden of the earth. There must, indeed, be eternal vigilance and increasing zeal and endeavor for the right. But can there be nobler or finer service than to contribute these? Or, if you, sleek and well-to-do and jealous of your fortunate share of good things, fear lest frenzy and drunkenness and vice invade your domain, will you not stop sneering at the reformers, who, in whatever line or of whatever sex or social scale, are trying to breast the torrent, and give them your countenance, your help, and your right arm? Shall our forecast of imminent or coming perils

unserve us and awake only a whine of despair; or shall it rather put us to our mettle, and to the development of the better influences which always have averted and always will avert disaster?

Grant the great accumulations of individual and corporate wealth, with its larger luxuries; grant this, and, if there be danger in it,—as there is,—be on your guard. But is it all evil? Have the multitude been correspondingly straitened and deprived? Are the homes, the food, the clothing, the literary and æsthetic tastes, and the amusements of the toilers, more limited, or do they share in the general betterment? Is the public library closed to them? Is there no newspaper,—a library in itself,—in their hands each day? Have they less or dimmer light to read by than before; or scantier means of conveyance from the city to the fields and beach; or more meagre communication with the great orbit of the living world, its interests, its activities, its resources? May we not yet find even in this bugbear of excessive wealth, with its perilous luxury emasculating those who enjoy it and tempting those who ape it, the seeds of the evil's own cure? If it be not so, it is the first instance of a corruption which has not wrought its own better life. Need we, indeed even now, look far off for a day when the vulgar gluttony of wealth will be the disdain

of good manners and high character, not worth its own heavy weight, and no longer the aim of a better and finer time? Is happiness, or was it ever, correspondent with wealth or luxury? Are not most men superior to either, or to the fever for them? I do not think it too much to say, that in the time to come, "Give me neither poverty nor riches" will be not only the wise man's prayer, but the "smart" man's maxim and the aristocrat's choice. What refreshment, even to-day, to turn to examples of wealth,—of which so many are illustrious in your own city,—which finds its most gracious use and its most indulgent luxury in cooling streams of charity and beneficence flowing broadcast amid the parched lowlands of want and ignorance and wrong! Under our system the easy mobility of wealth is its own no small safeguard and regulator. Not only do fortunes come and go; not only from all rounds of the social ladder do the millionnaires spring; but, even while retained in the same hand, wealth does not lie inactive and embayed, but is coursing everywhere, a trust rather than an exclusive possession to its owner, employing, supporting, enriching a thousand other men. To assail it is to attack not him, but them. It is engaged in their service more than in his. It has no existence except in this

very subservience to the general use. Destroy this function, and it is but a corpse, worth no man's having. Fortunate is the community, and men do not decay, where, under our institutions, wealth accumulates. It cannot fill one hand without overflowing into every other. It cannot live to itself alone.

Danger and peril enough indeed; need everywhere for safeguards and forethought! But the world is a failure and man is a lie if there be not in him the capacity to rise to his own might, and to keep pace with his own growth. Are education, science, is this godlike mind, are the soul and the moral nature, to count for nothing but their own disaster? Is there no future manhood to meet the future crisis? Is there no God? As the dead past buries its dead, so the unborn future will solve its own needs. Ours it is to do the duty of the present hour.

And to that high duty with what a trumpet-call are we summoned! I would at once avoid indiscriminate praise or blame of the things of to-day. I would not so assail our national and social and political character and men and institutions as to destroy our self-respect; nor, on the other hand, would I shut my eyes to the glaring defects that exist, and that are a reproach to any people. There is rust

upon our escutcheon. Our civil service cries aloud for the reform which has begun to come, and which is already shaping the action of politicians and departments that are unconsciously obeying the public sentiment it has created. There is sometimes lack of homely honesty in our touch upon the public money; there is dishonor in high places; there are frauds in finance. But these are evils not permanent in the heart of a progressive people. They are only incidental to incomplete systems. They suggest what would be a nobler and more vital theme for us at this time than even the Declaration of Independence of 1776; and that is a new and present declaration of independence, which, if proclaimed to the world in honesty and sincerity, would make some John Adams of to-day prophesy that it would be henceforward celebrated by succeeding generations from one end of the continent to the other.

The century just past was a century of military and political growth; the century opening this hour will be one of moral and scientific growth. The parties of the future can only succeed if they embody some great moral element and purpose. Let us have here and now a new declaration of independence,—independence from ignorance and prejudice and narrowness and false restraint; from the ruthless machinery of war, so that we may have the benefi-

cent influences of peace; from the clumsiness of any lingering barbarism, so that we may have the full development of a Christian civilization; from the crimes that infest and retard society; from intemperance and drunkenness and false gods; from low views of public trust. No declaration of the fathers would compare for a moment with a declaration of the high moral purposes that beckon us on to a loftier national life. The field is unlimited; the opportunity for growth inexhaustible. Only let us realize the absolute duty of impressing on the leading classes, as we call them, on the educated and religious classes, at least, the necessity of their projecting themselves out of the ranks which need no physician into the ranks which do. I do not mean the nonsense of class distinctions; I mean that whoever is a foremost man in any sphere, in the professions, in trade or elsewhere, whoever leads in polities, in church, in society, in the shop, must feel that on his shoulders alone rests the public safety.

There must be the sense of personal obligation on every man whose natural power or happy opportunities have given him a lift in anywise above the rest. Virtue, public and private, will become easy and popular when it is the badge and inspiration of the leaders; and good influences from the

top will permeate through the whole body politic as rain filters through the earth and freshens it with verdure and beauty and fertility. I would emphasize, more than anything else, the duty of the enlightened classes to throw all their energies into the popular arena. Why should the ingenuous youth, fresh from college, dream of Pericles swaying, with consummate address and eloquence, the petty democracy of Athens, and himself shun the town-house, where, in a golden age, beside which the age of Pericles is brass, is moulded the destiny of his own magnificent republic? Why kindle with the invective of Cicero, or the wit of Aristophanes, and himself be too dainty to lift voice or finger to banish Catiline and Cleon from manipulating the honor, the integrity, the achievement of the fatherland, bequeathed to him in sacred trust by his own heroic ancestors? Little sympathy is to be felt with the spirit that stands aloof and rails at the clumsy work of a government by the people, who, on their part, invariably welcome the approach of the man of culture, and will give him place if only he will not convey the idea that he despises it. It is useless to deny that the scholars have failed oftentimes — less of late — to improve their opportunity; and if ever the republic goes to the bad, it will be, not because the illit-

erate and lax have seized and depraved it, but because the instructed and trained have neglected it.

To me it seems axiomatic that the educated and virtuous, in a free State, can control it if they will. Here we are at the threshold of these great economic questions of labor, of capital, of currency. They affect the very tables and hearthstones and muscles of us all. We have yet to solve the problem of so distributing the excess of the grain of the world that no man shall be unable to fairly exchange his product for it; of so distributing the excess of wealth that no man shall be destitute who is willing to work. There will be fewer frauds upon the revenue when commerce is further relieved from its restraints. Defalcations will be rare when the proper channels for capital are alone open and the eddies and cataracts of baseless speculation are avoided. There will be no terrorism of strikes when labor is directed aright and its wages are its honest measure. There will be no bubbles to burst, no corners for the gamblers to work up, when the laws that regulate the carrying of the product to the consumer are learned, and the supply becomes a steady stream, flowing into and satisfying the demand. All these are the questions of the economy of the future. There lies before us a field which should

make the heart of a true man glad as he sees approaching a century of peace, of wise economies, of amelioration for the masses, of opportunity for lifting all men to a happy and useful activity. So shall those who follow reap a grander harvest than ours. It is God's earth, and He made it for His children. How the arts will educate and train them; how science will enlighten them; how great moral strides will take them to loftier planes of conduct and life! There can be no failure of the republic among an intelligent people, with schools for the young, with good examples in the past, with Christian ideals for the future. It has already surmounted its most stupendous risks and assaults. It has ridden them all safely over. The late civil war will only cement the structure. I am told that on the battle-fields of Virginia, so swift is time's erasure, where, now seventeen years ago, the land was rough with the intrenchments of the camp, already new woody growths have covered them over, and the foliage and the turf and the fruitful farms bear no mark of war, but wave with lines of beauty and of harvest. So be it, too, in the nation at large! The contest is over; the wrong is righted; the curse is off; the land is redeemed; the sweet angels of peace and reconciliation are

flitting from door to door, sitting at the tents, inspiring kinder thoughts and sympathies, and awakening at this very hour the ancient memories of a common sacrifice and a common glory. The great prolific fields of the South, its rivers and natural resources, saved from the blight of slavery, will be the loom and granary and wealth of us all. The softening influences of a common interest will draw together the people of all sections. Commerce and trade and learning, and all the affiliations that interweave the affections of a people, will surround and sustain the central pillar of a common country and destiny.

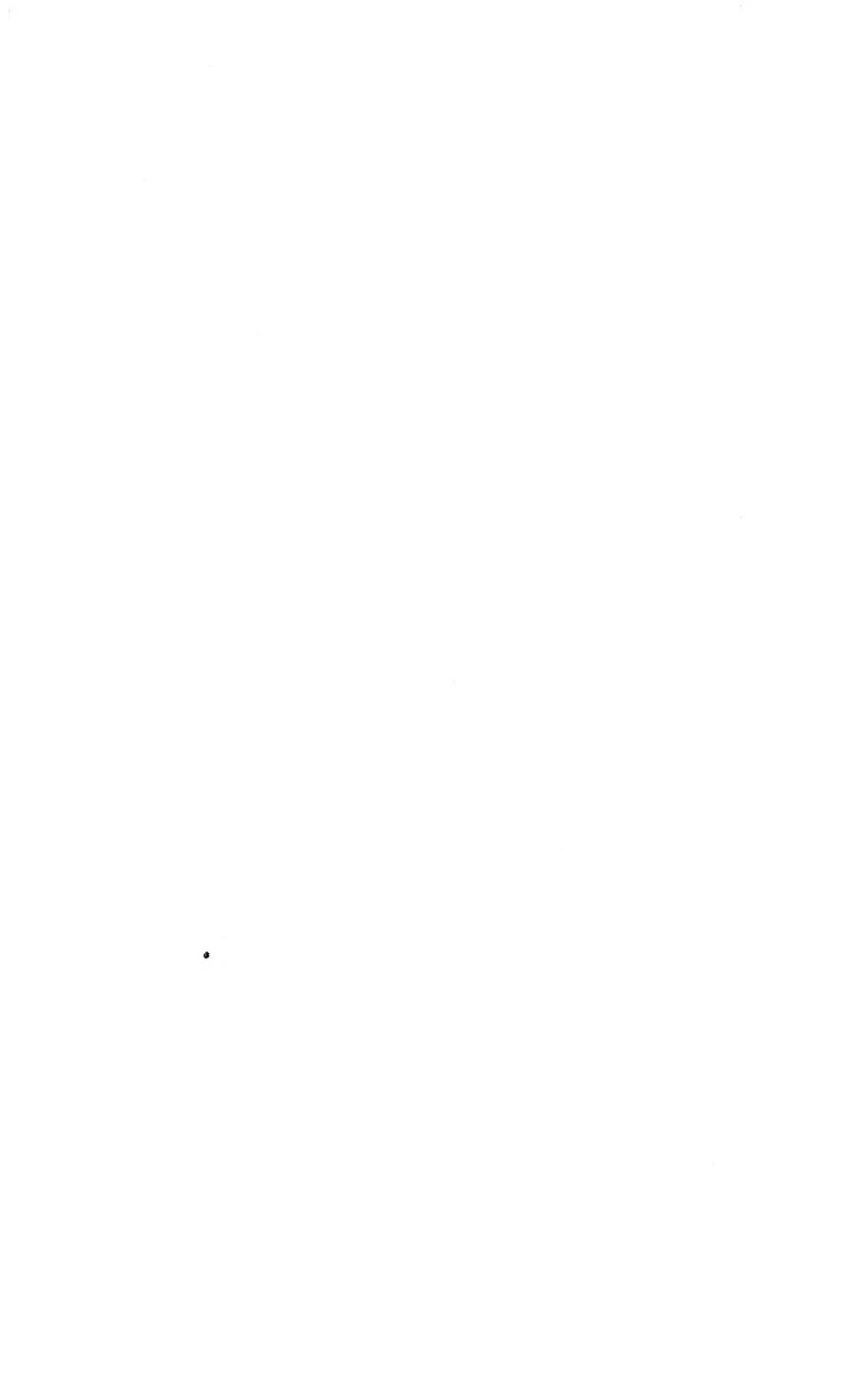
I am now the hundredth in that succession with whom Boston has charged her Fourth of July orations. Our beloved country is more than a hundred years old. A century has come and has gone. It is indeed but as a day; yet what a day! Not the short and sullen day of the winter solstice, but the long, glorious, and prolific summer day of June. It rose in the twilight glimmerings of the dawn of Lexington, and its rays falling on the mingled dew and gore of that greensward, and a little later across the rebel gun-barrels of Bunker Hill, and then tenderly lingering on the dead upturned face of Warren, broke in the full splendor of the first

Fourth of July and lay warm upon the bell in the tower of Independence Hall, as it rang out upon the air the cry of a free nation newly born. Its morning sun, now radiant and now obscured, shone over the battle-fields of the Revolution, over the ice of the Delaware, and over the ramparts at Yorktown swept by the onslaught of the chivalrous Lafayette. It looked down upon the calm figure of Washington inaugurating the new government under the Constitution. It saw the slow but steady consolidation of the Union. It saw the marvellous stride with which, in the early years of the present century, the republic grew in wealth and population, sending its ships into every sea, and its pioneers into the wilds of the Oregon and to the lakes of the North. It burst through the clouds of the war of 1812, and saw the navy of the young nation triumph in encounters as romantic as those of armed knights in tournament. It heard the arguments of Madison, Hamilton, Marshal, Story, and Webster, determining the scope of the constitution and establishing forever the theory of its powers and restrictions. It beheld the overthrow of the delusion that regarded the United States as a league and not a nation, and that would have sapped it with the poison of

nullification and secession. It saw an era of literature begin, distinguished by the stately achievements of the historian, the thought of the philosopher, the grace of oratory, the sweet pure verse of the American poets — poets of nature and the heart. It brought the tender ministry of unconsciousness to human pain. It caught the song of machinery, the thunder of the locomotive, the first click of the telegraph. It saw the measureless West unfold its prairies into great activities of life and product and wealth. It saw the virtue and culture and thrift of New England flow broad across the Mississippi, over the Rocky Mountains and down the Pacific slope, expanding into a civilization so magnificent that its power and grandeur and influence to-day overshadow indeed the fount from which they sprang. It saw America, first wrenching liberty for itself from the hand of European tyranny, share it free as the air with the oppressed and cramped peoples of Europe, carrying food to them in their starvation, offering them an asylum, welcoming their coöperation in the development and enjoyment of the generous culture and freedom and opportunity of the New World, and setting them, from the first even till now, an example of free institutions and local popular government, which every in-

telligent and self-respecting people must follow. Its afternoon was indeed overcast with shameful assault made on an unoffending neighbor to strengthen the hold of slavery upon the misguided interests of the country; and there came the fiery tempest of civil war: the heart of the nation mourned the slaughter of its patriots, and the treason and folly of its children of the South, yet welcomed them back to their place in the family circle. And now eventide has come; the storm is over; the long day has drawn to its close in the magnificent irradiation that betokens a glorious morning. We gather at our thresholds and hold sweet neighborly converse. Our children are about us in pleasant homes; our flocks are safe; our fields are ripening with the harvest. We recall the day, and pray that the God of the pilgrim and the patriot will make the morrow of our republic even brighter and better. May it indeed be the land of the free,—the land of education and virtue, in which there shall be none ignorant or depraved, none outside the pale of the influence and sympathy of the best, and therefore no swift or slow declension to corruption and death, no decline or fall for the future historian to write.





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